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Terena

/9/

Preface

/01/ In the area of scattered thickets and gallery forests /matas
/33/ de beira-rio/ of southern Mato Grosso there lives one of the
/97/ largest native groups in Brazil, the Terêna, of the Guaná fami-
/61/ ly and Aruak language. They number some 5,000 individuals, a very high figure for a Brazilian tribe, since most of them do not add up to a tenth of this.

/63/ Travelers on the Estrada de Ferro Noroeste do Brasil
[/96/] /Northwest Brazil Railroad/ that crosses the region can see them hoe in hand working on farm plots, on horseback tending the cattle of some fazendeiro, in the maintenance gangs of the railroad itself, or, more rarely, selling carandá palm fans at the stations.

/77/ It is difficult to identify them as Indians, since they dress, wear their hair, work, and live like the poor inlanders
/42/ /sertanejos/ of the region. One or another of them will present
/91/ a revealing Mongolian fold or the black, straight, stiff hair characteristic of the Indian and nearly all of them speak Portu-
/62/ guese with an odd accent. Yet even these traits fail to attract
/71/ much attention in a region where there are numerous Paraguayans and Bolivians with similar characteristics.

/19/ In order to find out whether they are natives, it is necessary to talk to them or listen to the local people, who are always prepared to identify them and to point out numerous negative peculiarities which, in their eyes, make them different and set them apart.

/21/ Indians of this sort, so little native, are not of interest
/77/ to the classical ethnologist, who is interested precisely in those untouched groups that best preserve the peculiarities of their
[/14/] traditional culture. For this very reason they have been the subject of very few studies. Yet they present as much, if not more interest than isolated tribes, because only their /10/ study will lead us to a better understanding of the process whereby tribal peoples are integrated into national societies and of

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a new situation with dramatic consequences for them, considering it determined the enlistment of these populations into a slave-oriented economy. The modern Terêna refer to this period as the "time of captivity."(105)

105. This situation of captivity lasted until the beginning of this century, when in 1904 Rondon, building the Telegraphic and Strategic Lines, passed through there and compelled the liberation of those Indians--many of whom worked on the building of the line--a liberation consummated with the creation of the Serviço de Proteção aos Indios in 1910 (cf. Missão Rondon, 1949:82-83).

The third human wave and, we can say, contemporary one, began with the connecting of São Paulo-Pôrto Esperança through the Noroeste do Brasil railroad (NOB). Its construction, begun in 1905 in Bauru, and in 1908 in Pôrto Esperança, was only completed in 1914, when the tracks from west and east met.(106) The possibilities for the economic development of

106. Cf. Fernando de Azevedo, 1950:127-128.

the region increased considerably and began with this to attract ever larger human contingents. And, while it is true that the progress brought by the railroad to the northwest of São Paulo state was never comparable to that brought to the lands of

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Mato Grosso, it is no less true to say that the NOB fostered the rise of a new human wave whose characteristic continuity and stability brought to Mato Grosso the seeds of a progress that we are still witnessing. The economic and demographic increase brought to Mato Grosso by the NOB changed the regional urban landscape, stimulated the creation of new population nuclei--which were being born along the railroad--, and thus imprinted a special character upon the indigenous configuration in that extensive area of southern Brazil.(107)

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107. "However, if in Mato Grosso the railroad did not determine the metamorphosis produced in the São Paulo zone, it did have an influence on the growth and transformation of towns and cities in the interior, along the railroad, such as Três Lagôas (with 5,154 inhabitants in 1940), Campo Grande, the traditional cattle-trading center of southern Mato Grosso (already with 23,054 inhabitants in 1940), Aquidauana (with 5,773), and others even beyond the end of the tracks, served by river navigation, such as Corumbá (13,319 inhabitants in 1940), which prospered with the introduction of the new means of transportation, leading to the decline of small urban centers in favor of the larger agglomerations along the railroad line. To get an

/82 cont./
Bananal and Ipegue

361 Bananal and Ipegue are two contiguous aldeas, close to the neo-Brazilian settlement of Taunay, from which they are [491] respectively four and eight kilometers distant. They are [496] situated in the Aquidauana município, and between them and Cachoeirinha it is no more than four leagues, which can be traveled on /83/ an old road, cut through the woods, or by the Noroeste do Brasil railroad, which connects the Duque Estrada stations with Taunay's.

162 The first accurate census data available compel us to 621 deal with them as a unit, because they give the total population of the reservation--which is only one, comprising the two aldeas--, without differentiating between the local groups. Thus, in 1918, Bananal-Ipegue presented the following statistical picture: male population, under ten years, 137 individuals; from eleven to twenty years, 133; from twenty-one to sixty years, 103; over sixty, 35 persons; female population, from zero to ten years, 100 individuals; from eleven to twenty years, 67; from twenty-one to sixty, 140; over 166 sixty, 35; giving a total of 750 individuals. By this time there was a constant influx of Indians to Bananal and Ipegue, coming from "colônias" set up on the fazendas of Miranda and 161 Aquidauana municípios. And in spite of the departure of a 162 considerable number of individuals for Cachoeirinha, around 621 1920, (146) in 1926 a population of 1,330 individuals was

161 166 621 [143] 146. Consulting the 1921 report of the Mato Grosso Inspetoria, we read: "The Indians keep coming in but they already feel that Bananal and Ipegue cannot hold them much longer; and they are shifting to

/85 cont./ [Bananal and Ipegue]

361 tendency to urbanization, did not fail to contaminate Ipegue,
[628] for the simple reason that the inhabitants of Ipegue had to go
[496] through Bananal to reach the railroad line; this owing to the geographic position of Bananal, situated between that aldea
[133] and the neo-Brazilian settlement of Taunay. The boundary
[132] between the two aldeas is Ipegue stream, full during the rainy reason--December to February--and reduced to a stream in the
[312] dry season, easily crossed on foot. It and two reservoirs, one in each /86/ of the aldeas, supply the communities with water.
[231] Which is not to say that in some years Ipegue and Bananal have not suffered from total drought; this is also the problem of Cachoeirinha, Passarinho, and Moreira.

[184] The layout of Ipegue is the same as that of Bananal,
[348] excepting naturally that degree imposed by the tendency to a more rapid urbanization of the latter. It comprises a central nucleus of 50 houses, aside from the post (a subpost, subordinate to the Taunay Native Post), the school, and the Catholic
[491] church. At the boundary with Bananal, that is, close to Ipegue stream, thus next to the road that connects the two aldeas, we find five ranchos with their respective farm plots. On the other side, northwest of Ipegue, on the boundaries of the reservation, there is a concentration of ranchos, about a half
[241] score, at the place called "Roças." Similarly to Cachoeirinha and Bananal, the farm plots of the inhabitants of the central nucleus are quite far off, in duly fenced-in areas, protected not only from cattle but also from pigs and chickens.

621 Ecologically speaking, Ipegue and Bananal are tied to
439 the city of Aquidauana, whereas Cachoeirinha, Moreira, Passarinho, União, and Lalima are tied to Miranda. The major purchases in those communities are made in Aquidauana,
[441] while minor ones are made in Taunay. In this regard, we had
[443] the opportunity to meet the Terêna "bolichoeiro" of Bananal, in Aquidauana, and we saw the amount of his purchases to supply his store in the aldea. But, aside from Bananal and Ipegue, two other aldeas are also tied to Aquidauana and far more intimately so: they are Limão Verde and Aldeinha.